

Guidance

No thought gives more concern to perplexed mortals, blindly stumbling along where they cannot see; forecast more often than otherwise astray; the utmost penetration of reason deceived; baffled by unexpected circumstances; sudden and surprising turns in the flow of events upsetting the most careful calculations; harrassed by the reflection that the road along which we are groping, feeling only a few inches before us like a blind man with his stick, may as easily lead to disaster as to success. There is light in just one direction: Guidance will surely come to a man who is *willing* to walk the road providence marks out for him.

A Big Contract

The question of safe limit to liberty and liberality of thought in the Christian community has always unduly agitated some minds, not fortunately blest with the faculty of wide comprehensiveness. Stop fussing and let the Christ life in the church set the limits of intellectual liberty and liberality. But you say: "The Christ life must be preserved by my definition." If that is so, go ahead, brother; but we venture to suggest that you have cut out a very large contract. The whole universe must be watching you at that work

The Real Unity

Unity in diversity is a law of nature, and we could scarcely imagine a more preposterous idea than a convention of the leaves, for instance, to determine upon a uniform pattern for all. We do not have in our eye the so-called "dress question," for this little Annual Meetingism belongs, so far as we are concerned, to the rubbish heap. But we are fully alive to the fact that the question of uniformity or diversity in religious belief, in church formulas, in doctrinal statement, is now as always a burning question. The human idea has always tended to accentuate the importance of uniformity, not merely the uniformity of essence, but the uniformity of outline. Hence came creeds, courts of ecclesiastical law, and other patterns, moulds, measuring lines, sheares and axes to make diverse men of one form and feature, and hence in a logical way came spiritual deadness and consequent corruption, for the dead rot. Out of God's wide temple of the skies with its free air and glorious, life giving sunlight, the church has again and again moved into the musty garret of conservatism and tradition. We are not at all concerned on account of the diversity of ideas and beliefs in the Brethren church referred to by Brother Cassel in his recent article. It is a sign of life. That our Brethren should be *like Christ* in *faith* and *love* and *good works*, is all that we are concerned about. As long as they are like Christ in these respects they are

vitaly right, and they cannot be vitaly right and vitaly wrong at the same time. Let them think as they please in secondary matters. The electionist and the free grace Christ man will both shout glory inside the gates of salvation. The second blessing crank and the gradual sanctification crank will both be as straight as a shingle in the New Jerusalem. That brother whose Holy Ghost baptism got to his heart but missed his head will see straight enough in the "light of the Lamb." Think for yourselves, brethren, and speak your minds freely. The essential unity, the one-ness in Christ, the likeness and image of the Father is what we are looking for, and it is what we see, too, in the charity, and zeal, and godliness of our growing and prosperous churches.

The Spirit of Obedience

Have we the spirit of an hireling, or the spirit of a son and heir? An honest introspection to determine this point may be a painful tho profitable task. There are those who regard with suspicion this practice of intropection. They say that if a man will make himself busy in external good works, his inner states and experiences may safely be left to take care of themselves. We do not deny that one of the best methods of reaching a satisfactory experience of inward grace is to occupy our time, our strength and our opportunities in doing good to others. "He that watereth shall himself be watered." Nevertheless this does not exclude the duty of self examination, by which we may learn, however active in good works we may be, whether our service is a service of love, or a service of constraint. At least once in a while we may profitably discuss this question with ourselves, for the spirit of service makes a world of difference, both as concerns our character and our attitude toward God. If we are simply rendering the obedience of fear, or constraint, or policy, or self interest. We may be sure that it will neither honor God nor profit us. It is not difficult to define the obedience of a son. It is characterized by zeal for the family interests, the family name, the family honor. It is not the obedience of calculation, for that is from the head, but affection for that is from the heart.

Did He Not Know?

It has been the custom of the New York *Independent*, at the close of each year, to gather statistics of the different denominations in the United States for publication in the first issue of the new year. These statistics are furnished by representative men of the several branches of the Christian church, and are reliable so far as the contributors are faithful in the presentation of the facts. The statistics thus gathered are supposed to show the numerical strength, the growth and pro-

gress of the churches reported. The contributors may not always be in possession of those facts which fairly represent the progress of the churches which they are called upon to report. We note that brother Grant Mahan, acting editor of the *Gospel Messenger*, reports the three branches of the "Dunkard Family," the Old Order, the German Baptists, and the Brethren. Of the Brethren he says: "They have opened a mission in Dayton, Ohio. Their mission receipts for the year were \$2,337 58. A part of the debt on Ashland College was paid and the school reopened in the fall of 1898." In a brotherly way we wish to ask Brother Mahan whether he did not know that the Brethren have a flourishing mission in Washington City; that a respectable sum has already been subscribed for the building of a new church house in that city? And does he not know that the Brethren have a mission in Chicago, supporting two missionaries there? And does he not know that the Brethren have started a neat sum for the opening of a mission in the foreign field? And lastly does he not know the Brethren have paid, not only *part* of the debt on Ashland College, but the entire debt, that the mortgages have been cancelled and that the institution is free from all indebtedness? These facts have been reported time and again in this paper of which Brother Mahan is a reader, or at least the EVANGELIST goes to that office, and if he is not acquainted with these facts he has had opportunity to be acquainted with them, and should have availed himself of the opportunity before making a contribution on the subject to a public journal.

An Interesting Find

The dry air and sands of Egypt, together with the careful stowing away of manuscript which seems to have been the custom of the ancients in the land of the pyramids, has tended to the preservation of many valuable papers, now coming to light thro the industry of learned Egyptologists. Among the latest finds is that of the "Acts of Paul" a volume which was testified to by the early fathers, and which appears to possess evidences of authenticity. The book was supposed to have been written in the lifetime of St. John. Tertullian and Jerome read it, and told who the author was. Only about one third of the work has been patched up from the papyrus leaves found, but there is of course eager hope that the rest may come to light out of some venerable tomb, giving the world much matter of interest concerning the incidents in the life of the famous apostle. We quote from one of the fragments the following description of Paul's personal appearance:

"And Onesiphorus saw Paul approaching, a man in short stature, bald-headed, crook-kneed, of a fresh complexion, with eye brows